

A Simple Guide To The Rulings of Fasting

**The Prophet (Sallallahu alayhi was sallam) Said,
"Paradise Has Eight Gates, And One Of Them Is
Called Ar-Raiyan Through Which None Will
Enter But Those Who Observe Fasting."**

(Sahih Bukhari)

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In The Name Of Allah, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful

The Ruling of Saum (Fasting)

❖ Allah says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

O you who believe! Observing As-Saum (the fasting) is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become Al-Muttaqûn (the pious)¹

Ruling

❖ Saum (Fasting) is the fourth pillar of Islam and whoever abandons fasting without an excuse, committing a major sin.

When to Start The Fast

❖ Fasting becomes Obligatory upon the sighting of the new moon²

¹ Surah Baqarah: 183

² Recorded in Bukhari and Muslim

The Start of Ramadan

- ❖ It is only considered the beginning of Ramadan with the sighting of the moon as is the case with the end of Ramadan.
- ❖ The beginning of the month is established by sighting of the crescent by one righteous person or by completing 30 days of the month sha'ban³.
- ❖ If the new moon is not seen due to cloud cover or due to some other reason, then Sha'ban is to be completed as 30 days⁴.
- ❖ No specific Dhikr (Remembrance) has been established from the Messenger of Allah (May peace and blessings be upon him) at the event of sighting the crescent.

Intention

- ❖ It is compulsory to make intention by night (prior to the fast) for the obligatory fasts
- ❖ As for the optional fasts if the intention is made at any time of the day (before the sun reaches its zenith) then the correct opinion is that a person has the reward of the whole day.

³ Recorded in Abu Dawud, Shaykh albani graded it Sahih

⁴ Recorded in Bukhari and Muslim

Fasting Is Not Obligatory Upon?

1) Traveller

2) The person who is ill

As to those whose sickness does not allow them to fast, they are of three types:

I. If it is neither hard nor harmful for them, they must observe fasting.

II. If it is hard, but not harmful for them, they are permitted to break their fast.

III. If it is harmful for them, then they must abstain from fasting.

3) Menstruating and post-partum women do not fast. (The women after makeup those days missed)⁵

4) The Mujahideen who are in Jihad. (It is recommended for those in jihad to break their fast if it will make them weak in the battlefield)⁶

⁵ Recorded in Bukhari

⁶ Recorded in Muslim

Recommended Acts for the Fasting Person To Do

- 1) Taking the meal of Suhoor⁷
- 2) Breaking the fast as soon as the sun sets⁸.
- 3) Making Dua (Supplication) upon breaking fast. The Reference for the Dua below⁹:

ذَهَبَ الظَّمَأُ، وَابْتَلَّتِ الْعُرُوقُ، وَثَبَتَ الْأَجْرُ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ

"The thirst has gone and the veins are quenched, and reward is confirmed, if Allah wills."

- 4) The Prophet will break his fast with ripe dates or he will break his fast with dried dates if ripe dates when ripe dates was not present¹⁰
- 5) Refraining from useless speech, foul language and other acts that do not befit the fast¹¹
- 6) Generosity in giving Sadaqah¹²

⁷ Recorded in Muslim

⁸ Recorded in Bukhari and Muslim

⁹ Recorded in Abu Dawud, albani graded it Hasan

¹⁰ Recorded in Abu Dawud and Tirmizi, albani graded it Hasan Sahih

¹¹ Recorded in Bukhari

¹² Recorded in Bukhari and Muslim

Those Things They Nullify the Fast

- 1) Intentionally eating or drinking.
- 2) Vomiting intentionally.¹³
- 3) Sexual intercourse.¹⁴
- 4) Ejaculation by means of kissing or caressing. (Wet dreams or unintentional ejaculation does not break the fast)
- 5) Menstruation and post-partum bleeding¹⁵

Actions that is permissible for the fasting person

The following actions are allowed for the fasting person to do:

- 1) Washing for the sake of getting cooler¹⁶
- 2) Having Hijaamah (Cupping) done (It is the majority opinion amongst the scholars).¹⁷ However it is disliked for the person who is weak¹⁸
- 3) Kissing or touching one's spouse for the one who has the ability to control his actions¹⁹
- 4) To use Siwak²⁰ (A twig taken from the roots of the arak tree and used as a toothbrush.)
- 5) Taste the food without swallowing for the one cooking
- 6) It is allowed to use eye drops, ear drops and nose drops as long as none of them reach the stomach

¹³ Recorded in Tirmizi, Abu Dawud and Ibn Majah

¹⁴ Recorded in Bukhari and Muslim

¹⁵ Recorded in Bukhari

¹⁶ Recorded in Abu Dawud, albani graded it Hasan

¹⁷ Recorded in Bukhari

¹⁸ Recorded in Bukhari

¹⁹ Recorded in Bukhari and Muslim

²⁰ Recorded in Bukhari

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Recommended Days to Fast

The Messenger of Allah Sallallahu alayhi was sallam recommended the fasting of the following days:

- 1) Six days out of the month of Shawwal²¹
- 2) Fasting the day of Arafah for those who are not performing Hajj (Pilgrimage) and fasting the day of Ashoora as well as one day before it²²
- 3) Fasting most of the month of Sha'ban²³
- 4) Fasting Monday and Thursday²⁴
- 5) Any three days out of every month²⁵. It is recommended that those days be the 13, 14 and 15 days of the month (these days are the days of the full moon)
- 6) The first ten days of the month of Dhul-Hijjah²⁶
- 7) Fasting one day and not fasting the next²⁷. (This is the fast of Dawud Alayhi salaam which is the most beloved fast to Allah.)

²¹ Recorded in Muslim

²² Recorded in Muslim

²³ Recorded in Bukhari and Muslim

²⁴ Recorded in Abu Dawud, albani graded it sahih

²⁵ Recorded in Bukhari and Muslim

²⁶ Recorded in Abu Dawud, albani graded it Sahih

²⁷ Recorded in Bukhari and Muslim

The Days on Which It Is Forbidden To Fast

- 1) The two days of Eid²⁸
- 2) The days of Tashreeq²⁹ (The days of Tashreeq are the days after the day of sacrifice on the 10th of Dhul-Hijjah and the scholars differ as to whether they are two or three days)
- 3) Fasting Friday by itself³⁰
- 4) Fasting on Saturday by itself³¹ (Shaykh Uthaymeen said: When a person intends to fast an optional fast because it is Saturday, and he singles it out, then this is the actual fasting on Saturday that is prohibited.)
- 5) Fasting a day or two before the month of Ramadan (i.e. the last days of Sha'ban) unless a person regularly fasted on those days in which case he can fast.³²
- 6) The "Day of Doubt" (The day which there is doubt as to whether Ramadan has begun or not)³³
- 7) Fasting the whole year, even if one breaks the fast during the prohibited days³⁴

²⁸ Recorded in Bukhari and Muslim

²⁹ Recorded in Abu Dawud, albaní graded it Sahih / Recorded in Muslim

³⁰ Recorded in Bukhari and Muslim

³¹ Recorded in Abu Dawud, Tirmizi and Ibn Majah

³² Recorded in Bukhari and Muslim

³³ Recorded in Abu Dawud, Nasa'i and Ibn Majah, albaní graded it sahih

³⁴ Recorded in Muslim

Suhoor (Pre-Dawn Meal)

- ❖ It is a Sunnah to delay the Pre-Dawn Meal to the last portion of the night.
- ❖ There are blessings in Pre-Dawn Meal as it gives the fasting person energy to perform acts of worship throughout the day such as reciting the Quran, being obedient, connecting the ties of kinship and other good deeds.

Fasting For The People Who Have A Valid Excuse Not To Fast

- ❖ The traveller has the option to either fast or not, according to his condition.
- ❖ It is allowed for those who are (not constantly) ill and for travellers to break their fasts during Ramadan, but they must make up the days they missed after Ramadan.
- ❖ It is obligatory on the breastfeeding and pregnant women to make up fasts missed, and it is more safer for them to feed a Miskeen (Poor person) as a substitute for each day missed in addition to making up for it (after breastfeeding/pregnancy).
- ❖ The one who has sexual intercourse during the daylight hours of Ramadan must make up for it and must expiate for it³⁵. This is the case for both the man and the woman if she did not detest.

³⁵ The expiation is when one frees a slave and if not able then fast two consecutive months and if not possible then feed sixty poor people.

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I'tikaaf (Seclusion In The Masjid)

- ❖ I'tikaaf may be done at the beginning, middle and end of Ramadan and it is a Sunnah by consensus. It is best to perform I'tikaaf at the end of Ramadan.
- ❖ There is no limit to the maximum number of days for I'tikaaf but the minimum time for I'tikaaf is an hour.
- ❖ I'tikaaf begins before the sunset of the 21st night of Ramadan and finishes on the night of Eid (the night proceeding the day of Eid).
- ❖ During I'tikaaf the Mu'takif (person performing I'tikaaf) should busy himself in the remembrance of Allah, His worship, His obedience and in seeking beneficial knowledge.
- ❖ The one who is performing I'tikaaf is not allowed to have intimate physical contact with his wife. However, the Mu'takif is allowed to touch his wife. Sexual intercourse renders the I'tikaaf null and void.
- ❖ The Mu'takif is allowed to exit the place of I'tikaaf due to a necessity without prolonging his leave.
- ❖ I'tikaaf may be done outside of Ramadan and may be done without fasting.